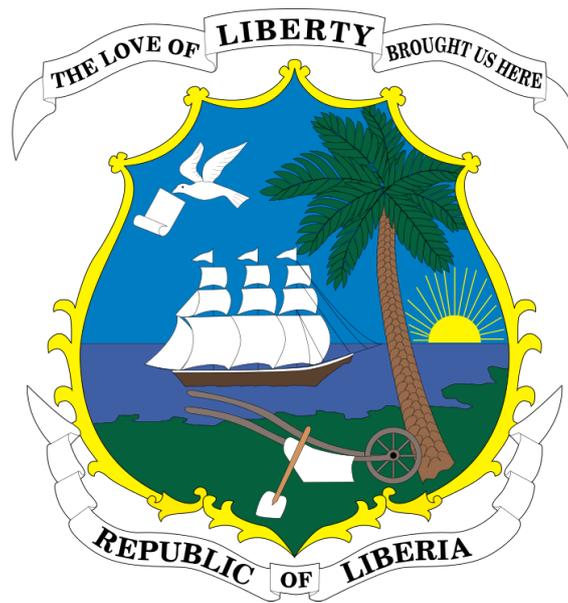


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# **World Trade Organization Ministerial Conference 11**



## **OFFICIAL STATEMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA**

**Delivered by**

**H.E Axel M. Addy  
Minister**

**Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Republic of Liberia**

**Tuesday, December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2017  
Hilton Convention Center  
Buenos Aires, Argentina**

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1. Minister Susana Malcorra, Chair of MC11, and Vice Chairs
2. H.E. Mr. Roberto Azevêdo, Director General of the WTO and Members of the WTO Family
3. Excellencies,
4. Distinguished Colleagues,
5. Delegates,
6. Ladies and Gentlemen;
7. On behalf of the people of Liberia, let me first take this opportunity in joining other delegations to thank the Government and People of Argentina and Director-General Roberto Azevêdo for hosting this conference.
8. Madam Chair, one year ago, Liberia joined the WTO. My President, H.E. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, spoke at the Nairobi Ministerial and expressed optimism and unrelenting faith in the diversity, strength and core principles of the multilateral trading system.
9. For Liberia, the WTO is a model for negotiation, development, and partnership. Our accession served as a blueprint to implement the structural reforms needed and to ensure a predictable and transparent trading environment notably through Liberia's WTO Post-Accession Strategy and Implementation Plan. Liberia remains grateful to the EIF, ITC, UNCTAD and the WTO for their support in our journey towards inclusive economic transformation.
10. During this Ministerial, Liberia joined Afghanistan, Comoros, Somalia, South Sudan, Timor-Leste and Yemen to launch the g7+ Accessions Group to ensure continued partnership and faster integration for fragile and conflict affected states in international trade. Also in this regard, let me highlight Liberia's support for the application of South Sudan for observer status at the WTO.
11. Madam Chair, Distinguished Delegates. Today, we find the multilateral trading system under threat. As such, Liberia associates itself with the Joint Declaration on the Multilateral Trading System and also supports the Joint Declaration on Trade and Women Empowerment.
12. Colleagues; Distinguished Delegates. Today too many of our citizens live in realities of hopelessness and indignity. What we as a body have negotiated into trade rules based on consensus, meant to transform those realities, has not translated into a realization of



inclusive prosperity for all. As such, it means we still have much work to do. In this vein, my delegation challenges all of us, in a spirit of cooperation and oneness of purpose, for the sake of the bottom billion, to explore all possible opportunities of convergence not only on outstanding issues but also new realities affecting global trade. We must commit to finding points of convergence on outstanding DDA issues however small they may be. If we truly aspire to go far in the right direction for a better life for all of our citizens, regardless the locations of their birth, we must commit to walking together.

13. Madam Chair, in a rapidly changing world, the economic order that drives our exchanges of goods and services has also evolved and as a body, we must commit to constructive dialogue on new issues if we are to remain relevant. Our failure to do so will fail the dreams and aspirations of our citizens venturing in new frontiers with the wrong direction from the wrong authorities on global trade. To this end, my delegation welcomes the dialogue on e-commerce, MSMEs and investment facilitation.
14. Madam Chair, Distinguished Delegates. In a few days, Liberians will be going to the polls to elect a new administration, the first democratic transition since 1944. We call on this body to support the new administration in the implementation of the WTO Post Accession plan for the restructuring of the economy, and for inclusive growth that is more sustainable. We have come a long way in a short period of time, and it is vital that the next administration continues the process we have started.
15. Excellencies, Distinguished Colleagues. Today we exist in a globally connected reality, a force of our own creation, now a force of nature. No nation, absolutely, no nation can ever again exist as an island in today's reality. This body, our World Trade Organization, is the only global structure positioned to derived rules and solutions based on consensus that can help to steer this force of nature as a force for good. To leave such a force unchecked, with no direction, is to risk a reality of an uncivilized world of survival of the fittest. This organization, our WTO matters more today, more than it has ever mattered in the history of this organization given our more complex interconnected world. It is therefore all of our collective responsibility to make it a true force for good, ensuring equal prosperity for all. Where the quality of global trade is guided by lives transformed. My delegation, Liberia, stands ready to work, are you?
16. Thank you, Madam Chair.